

vegetation management



Trimming With Purpose

We all enjoy a big shade tree, tire swing and place to carve our sweetheart's initials. Like you, Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative values trees for their beauty and environmental benefits, but we also respect the danger they create to your electricity and safety when they are close to power lines.

Managing vegetation near power lines is something we are actually required to do as part of the National Electrical Safety Code. It is critically important part of our obligation to provide safe and reliable electricity, as well as prevent potentially fatal accidents.

WHY TRIM BEFORE THE LIMB REACHES THE POWER LINE?

Waiting is like closing the barn door after the horse is out! We anticipate potential issues and address them to prevent disruptions in your service and also to avoid the high costs of repairing damaged infrastructure.

HOW DO TREES CAUSE OUTAGES?

During severe storms or when the soil is saturated from heavy rain, falling trees can bring down lines and break the poles holding them. But that kind of worst-case scenario is not necessary for power outages to occur; a broken branch can easily bring wires together, creating a disruption in service that can impact power reliability.

WHAT ABOUT THE DANGER TO PEOPLE?

When our crews are working to restore power after storm damage, they need a safe, tree-free margin in which to pull wires and set poles. By maintaining an adequate distance between trees and poles and connected equipment, we also reduce risk to you and your family from accidental contact with energized lines.

WHAT IS MLEC'S PLAN FOR TRIMMING AND SPRAYING?

We use a variety of approved, environmentally sound methods to maintain the required 20 feet of clearance all the way around — from poles and wires at an individual home or business all the way to the substation. Trimming practices are in accordance with guidelines and standards for good tree health recommended by the International Society of Arboriculture and National Arbor Day Foundation.

Likewise, herbicides utilized by MLEC contractors are registered with the Environmental Protection Agency and administered by licensed applicators. Contractors survey the areas to be treated and prescribe an appropriate mix that will promote a subtle transition of the right of way into native grasses and flowering plants. These herbicide application services are vital to affordable accessibility while also promoting environmental stewardship, habitats and multiuse of the right of way.

DO I HAVE ANY OPTIONS?

For special situations where the property owner would like to take a more personal investment and agrees to **maintain** the right of way according to the required distance, options are available. (If interested, contact your local MLEC office as soon as possible. For 2023, the form must be signed and everything in place by **May 15.**)



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